



TDA Helping Seniors Increasing access for Texas seniors to the Supplemental Food Program.



It's Citrus Season Ruby Red Grapefruit is the star of Texas winter fruits. Did you know Texas has 3 varieties?



TDA Updates Harvest of the Month, new GO TEXAN partners, Texas chili recipe, and more!



TEXAS AGRICULTURE Matters!

Your monthly connection to the Texas Department of Agriculture.

Volume 3
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Howdy Neighbors!

Welcome to the Texas Agriculture Matters newsletter, your monthly connection to the Texas Department of Agriculture.

Happy New Year, Texas! I am hopeful this year will bring us prosperous harvests and decent weather, although I wouldn't mind more rain.

This year you can learn more about Texas agriculture just by reading this newsletter. It's your one stop shop for all things Texas producers, ranchers, and agricultural related programs. I also encourage you to tune in to our Texas Agriculture Matters TV show on RFD-TV. Lastly, please continue to support our fellow Texans by shopping for products with the GO TEXAN mark!

Remember friends,
Texas Agriculture Matters!

THE TEXAS SIZED FIGHT Against Citrus Canker

An ominous threat to the Texas citrus industry looms on the horizon of her groves. Commissioner Sid Miller's mission is to eradicate this threat and protect a vital sector of Texas agriculture. Citrus canker is a severely contagious plant disease caused by the bacterium *Xanthomonas citri p.v. citri*.

The Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA) works in partnership with the United States Department of Agriculture-Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service-Plant Protection Quarantine (USDA-APHIS-PPQ) in citrus orchard and residential surveys to detect citrus canker. All citrus cultivars and some relatives can be affected by citrus canker.

Trees that dot orange farms across Florida are no stranger to the aggressive infections caused by citrus canker and the state has spent billions trying to control it. Texas eradicated the disease in 1947 after relentless outbreaks lead to federal

initiated programs to quarantine and destroy infected trees. But according to Texas A&M AgriLife, in October 2015, the disease was confirmed in symptomatic lime and lemon trees in Rancho Viejo in Cameron County, Texas (Alabi & Ong, 2016).



Spread of pathogen can start with insects, or tropical storms and even humans take part in accidental dispersal of this disease. The primary way citrus canker spreads across locations are human activities that move infected materials (budwood and fruit) from one place to another. Pruning, hedging, and trimming can introduce the possibility of infection through open wounds and lesions created by feasting bugs and animals offer additional entrance points for the bacterium. Equipment can cause citrus canker to proliferate, especially if an unknown infected tree exists in a field, as they are used from tree-to-tree.

Damage from citrus canker has no boundaries and is found throughout the Southern region of the U.S. Neighboring states, such as Louisiana, must join the fight in removing infected trees to make this threat obsolete.

Commissioner Miller requested funding from the 86th Texas Legislative Appropriation Committee for additional road station locations around Texas' border. The request was denied but Commissioner Miller has vowed to continue to pursue this action with the Texas Legislature.

The citrus canker bacterium grows and multiplies quickly when it finds

a juicy host; creating blister like lesions that expand to neighboring trees and fruit. It oozes out from diseased plant parts where there is ample moisture and easily spreads to cause new infections (Alabi & Ong, 2016). As the disease progresses, leaves will develop a shot-hole look, and will eventually die and fall out. Citrus canker has been found to cause premature leaf and fruit drop, twig die back, general decline and blemished fruit. Thankfully, the bacterium poses no risk to human or animal health but does makes fruit unsightly and unmarketable.

Economic damage would be detrimental to Texas, citrus fruit production is valued at \$100 million (USDA-NASS, 2018) and citrus canker has the power to eliminate a large portion of the industry. Florida has taken considerable effort to fight citrus canker and has spent over \$1 billion in failed attempts. The costs to growers have been calculated to be \$107 to \$181 million per year, about 10 to 20 percent of the total cost of fresh fruit production. Extrapolating from costs in Florida, it's estimated that if citrus canker were to become endemic in Texas, the cost associated with 'living with the disease' would be \$10 to \$20 million per year.

Control and prevention are the best approach to managing citrus canker

because there is no cure. Producers should remove and destroy diseased plants to eliminate potential bacteria growth. Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA) regulations require disposal of infected tree and plant material by burning or bagging and burying it at least 2 feet at a municipal landfill. TDA and Texas A&M AgriLife recommend buying plants from TDA-certified nurseries, using good sanitation practices on tools and equipment, and using plant protection chemicals that contain copper.

Commissioner Miller and TDA are committed to eliminating citrus canker and regional inspectors are hard at work every day. Almost 2,000 infected trees have been destroyed from Rancho Viejo to Pearland, Texas.

In addition, Commissioner Miller and dedicated teams within the agency have created a new campaign, Save Texas Citrus, to educate and inform Texans of citrus canker. He is calling on all Texans to join together in the effort to eradicate this disease. Our citrus industry and farmers matter. Texas Agriculture Matters. 🇹🇽

If you suspect that a citrus plant has citrus canker, report the tree to TDA at (800)835-5832 or [online](#).

TEXAS AGRICULTURE Matters!



TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
COMMISSIONER SID MILLER

*Produced by the Office of Communications
Editor, Katlyn Gast*

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ABOUT COMMISSIONER SID MILLER

Sid Miller is an eighth generation farmer and rancher and the 12th Commissioner of Agriculture for the great State of Texas. Commissioner Miller has devoted his life to the agriculture industry, and supporting Texas producers and the communities they call home. He is a businessman, rancher, community leader, former ag teacher and former school board member. Commissioner Miller is a rodeo cowboy and holds 18 world championship titles. He is an honors graduate of Tarleton State University in Stephenville, where he received a Bachelor of Science in Vocational Agriculture Education.



Images courtesy of USDA Flickr

ABOUT TDA

The Texas Legislature established the Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA) in 1907. The agency's key objectives are to promote production agriculture, consumer protection, economic development and healthy living. The agriculture commissioner oversees the agency and is elected every four years. The current commissioner, Sid Miller, was elected in 2014. TDA is a diversified state agency that provides value-added services through our regulatory and marketing and initiatives. TDA is headquartered in Austin and has five regional service offices, two sub-offices, three laboratories and five livestock export facilities.

Mission:

TDA's mission is to partner with all Texans to make Texas the nation's leader in agriculture, fortify our economy, empower rural communities, promote healthy lifestyles, and cultivate winning strategies for rural, suburban and urban Texas through exceptional service and the common threads of agriculture in our daily lives.

Commissioner Sid Miller

responds to

Citrus Maturity Testing (PATCH #065)

On April 26, 2021, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) issued PATCH #065 which suspended the juice content requirement that pertains to maturity determination for imported grapefruits.

Texas and other domestically-produced grapefruits must still adhere to strict grade standards. Paired with the devastation that Texas grapefruit producers suffered during Winter Storm Uri, this relaxation in standards for imported grapefruit gives foreign producers the opportunity to import significant quantities of inferior fruit. Evidence already exists to corroborate this statement.

USDA Agricultural Marketing Service has reported a 500% increase in grapefruit loads from Mexico for October and November 2021 relative to October and November 2020. If the juice content requirement for maturity determination had not been suspended, 149 out of 174 lots tested between September 1st and October 28th would have failed.

In other words, 85.6% of the tested lots would have previously been rejected for sale to American consumers.



"Texas producers adhere to strict grade standards, which has afforded Texas-grown grapefruits high regard from consumers. If Mexico is allowed to bypass the same standards and export copious amounts of inferior fruit, then not only will the price received by Texas grapefruit producers crash, but consumer perception of grapefruits will also suffer."

-Commissioner Sid Miller

Since this suspension was enacted as a patch instead of a rule change, there was no opportunity for public comment that could have revealed these serious concerns. Grapefruit producers in Texas were not approached for their input, and it is unclear if consideration was given to how these changes could affect them and other domestic grapefruit producers.

In order to have free and fair trade, producers of the same commodity must abide by the same standard. Commissioner Miller sent a letter



to Secretary Vilsack on November 12th strongly urging the USDA to immediately reinstate the juice content requirement for imported grapefruit maturity determinations. 🇺🇸

[Statements by Commissioner Miller and FDACS can be read here.](#)

TDA Working to Increase Access to Commodity Supplemental Food Program for Seniors

Every month, the Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA) partners with 12 Texas food banks to distribute almost 70,000 packages of food to eligible seniors in the Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP). TDA administers the program in Texas and is currently training a new partner, Tarrant Area Food Bank, to successfully operate CSFP in the Fort Worth area. Later this year, Tarrant Area Food Bank will join the other Texas food banks distributing healthy food from CSFP to Texans in need.


The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) purchases the food for CSFP from agricultural producers in the United States and its territories. Eligible seniors ages 60 and older receive a box that includes about 35 pounds of shelf-stable products such as canned fruit, vegetables, meat or fish; bottled juice; dry milk; pasta, rice, dry beans or peanut butter. All the products contribute to a healthy diet for low-income seniors.

Food banks access the food directly from USDA vendors and distribute it to their partners at churches, community centers and other facilities accessible to older Texans. Along with the food, the seniors receive nutrition education about why



eating healthy is important. They can take the food home and prepare it as needed.

Food banks are vital to TDA's ability to help Texans through CSFP, and Tarrant Area Food Bank will strengthen TDA efforts in the Fort Worth area. Food banks also partner with TDA in other federal nutrition programs such as the Emergency

Food Assistance Program and the Summer Food Service Program. Agriculture Commissioner Sid Miller encourages Texans to support the important work of food banks with donations and volunteer hours. Find your nearest food bank by typing in a ZIP code at [FeedingAmerica.org](https://www.feedingamerica.org) or visiting TDA's [squareMeals.org/TXFoodBanks](https://squaremeals.org/TXFoodBanks) 



HARVEST OF THE MONTH

RED GRAPEFRUIT

JANUARY

The Texas red grapefruit is a tangy-tasting citrus fruit that grows in three different varieties — Rio Star, Ruby Sweet and Flame. All varieties are in supermarkets from October through May.

STORAGE

- Store grapefruit at room temperature and use within a few days.
- Do not store grapefruit inside a plastic bag or closed container. Air will not circulate well and can cause the fruit to get moldy and spoil early.
- To keep for four to six weeks, store at above refrigerated temperature and below room temperature (45-50°F) with 85-95% relative humidity.



+ BENEFITS

The Texas red grapefruit is high in vitamins A and C, which means eating a Texas red grapefruit or drinking its juice, is good for the eyes and skin, and strengthens the body's immune system against colds, the flu and other viruses.

Talking to Students about Vitamin C

Vitamin C supports maintenance of collagen, protects against infection and helps in iron absorption.

✓ SELECTION

- Texas red grapefruits do not continue to ripen once harvested, so it is best to choose those that are firm, smooth-skinned, shiny and brightly colored specimens.
- Avoid fruits with soft spots, bruises and discolored skins.
- Heavy, thinner-skinned citrus fruits tend to be juicier than light, thick-skinned fruits.
- A very rough peel is often thick and a strong indication that the underlying fruit may be small and dry.
- Visible surface defects such as scars, scratches and discoloration do not affect flavor.

🧺 PREPARATION

- Like other citrus fruits, the Texas red grapefruit does not require much preparation before being eaten, other than being peeled, sliced in half or divided into several slices. It is recommended to wash the fruit under cool running water even before it is peeled.
- The Texas red grapefruit can also be strained for its juice or broiled.

🍴 TASTING TIP

Share a fun fact with children when sampling new food items.



This product was funded by USDA.
This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
COMMISSIONER SID MILLER



ITS CITRUS SEASON *in Texas*

If there's anything a Texan loves, it's a juicy Red Ruby Grapefruit. These iconic fruits adorn the branches of citrus orchards in the Lower Rio Grande Valley November through March. Ruby Red Grapefruits are unique because of the bright red fleshed varieties which arose in Texas by mutation from existing grapefruit in the early 1900s.

Grapefruit originated as a natural mutation of the pummelo and orange somewhere in the West Indies. It was first described in 1750 in Barbados and the term grapefruit appeared on record in 1814 in Jamaica. It's believed that a Jamaican farmer named the fruit grapefruit because it grows on trees in clusters like grapes. Grapefruit seeds soon made their way to America by French or Spanish settlers.

The earliest record of grapefruit shipments from Texas was 120 tons during the 1919-20 season and peak production reached 960,000 tons during the 1945-46 season. Around 1929, a mutation on a single tree became the famed Texas Ruby Red, which received the first-ever patent awarded to a grapefruit.

The Texas Red Grapefruit was designated the official state fruit of Texas in 1993 by the 73rd legislature. Due to its renowned sweetness and rich, red interior, nutritional content, and contributing outstanding revenue to the Texas economy, the designation was an easy one. "As distinctive as the



proud state from which it originates, the Texas Red Grapefruit will serve as a fitting emblem for the bounties of nature with which our state is blessed".

Today, the Texas citrus industry is comprised of almost 27,000 acres across a three-county area. Citrus growers produce more than 9 million cartons of fresh grapefruit and oranges each year and another 5 million cartons of juice fruit valued at over \$100 million dollars.

You can buy Texas grown citrus from GO TEXAN partners to ensure you're only getting the best grapefruits around! 🇹🇽





Image courtesy of 6G Heritage Farms Facebook

Texas Florals

The holidays are over; the decorations are boxed and stored away. Now, for many, the house feels a bit emptier, possibly even a little darker. Maybe it's the sudden disappearance of holiday lights and bright colors, maybe it's the change in weather to cooler temperatures as we settle in to a Texas winter. No matter the reason, now is the perfect time to perk things up with some fresh Texas florals!

Floral arrangements are not just for special occasions. Floral arrangements help to brighten a room, to lift spirits or help bring back fond memories. Studies have proven that flowers help to alleviate stress and help to increase relaxation and encourage a spirit of cooperation.

Texas has numerous fresh cut flower

growers who are working hard every day to ensure that their product is readily available to add color and life to your home. Buying local, Texas grown flowers will assure that they will be fresher, more vibrant, and last longer.

Another benefit of locally grown flowers is their cost-effectiveness. Transporting flowers across the state costs less, and the packing, freight and customs fees associated with importing flowers are eliminated. This is a win-win for florists and consumers.

For the very best, insist on local! Look for the GO TEXAN mark or go to www.texaslocalflorist.com to find some of the very best professionals in the industry right where you live. 🇺🇸



Texas Agriculture Commissioner Sid Miller announced record sale numbers from the GO TEXAN Pavilion, sponsored by Southwest Dairy Farmers, at the recently concluded State Fair of Texas in Dallas. Miller praised the work of his TDA employees and said that the sales numbers show demand for Texas products is “bigger and better than ever.”

The GO TEXAN program is a Texas Department of Agriculture initiative dedicated to identifying and supporting Texas-based businesses and connecting them with customers across the Lone Star State and around the world. Every year at the State Fair, the GO TEXAN Pavilion hosts approximately 100 GO TEXAN partner businesses selling food and goods produced in Texas, by Texans.

“The sales from the 2021 State Fair at the GO TEXAN Pavilion saw an increase of 12% to \$480,058.91 compared to the last State Fair in 2019. GO TEXAN demonstrates that a quality product, hard work and ingenuity can create a tremendous economic boom,” Miller stated.

“Our TDA staff worked hard and diligently with our GO TEXAN Partner vendors to create a Pavilion that was as inviting and friendly as Texas, while being educational for Texas kids.” Miller also praised the GO TEXAN businesses who were central to the success of the Pavilion.

“The GO TEXAN Pavilion had over 80,000 items sold to more than 13,000 customers. That doesn’t happen without quality products and solid brands representing the best of Texas,” Miller stated.



GO TEXAN sponsors were equally pleased with the results of this year’s State Fair. Back this year was Pioneer, a leading manufacturer of gravy and baking mixes, as well as other beloved consumer products.

“As a true Texas brand with 170 years of history, continuing Pioneer’s partnership with the TDA and the GO TEXAN Pavilion at the State Fair of Texas was an easy decision,” said Svetlana Markova, Senior Brand Manager for Pioneer. “After a difficult couple of years for so many in our state, being part of an event that embodies the values we hold close – joy, comfort and celebrating moments of togetherness – is especially meaningful.”

Jim Hill, CEO of Southwest Dairy Farmers was equally pleased with this year’s results. Southwest Dairy Farmers served as the presenting sponsor of this year’s Pavilion.

“Like so many others, we were thrilled to be back at the GO TEXAN Pavilion. Educating the public on Texas agriculture is such a crucial aspect of the State Fair of Texas. Our sponsorship of the GO TEXAN Pavilion allows us to be a part of that important message, and we look forward to our continued partnership to promote Texas agriculture and dairy,” Hill said. 🇹🇽



GO TEXAN.

FIND THE MARK *that matters*

WHAT

does it mean? When you see the mark, you know the product or place has been proudly certified as authentically Texan.

WHERE

do you find it? Look for the mark anywhere you shop, from local farmer's markets to national retail chains.

Support Texas.
Want to learn more?
gotexan.org
#GOTEXAN




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Fresh From the Field

GO TEXAN Market at the



GO TEXAN representatives and partners will be present at the GO TEXAN Market at the Fort Worth Stock Show and Rodeo on January 14 - February 5, 2022. Stop by to learn more about the iconic GO TEXAN mark and the benefits of joining this award-winning program. A good product is made in the USA but a great product is made right here in the Lone Star State! 🇺🇸

Find GO TEXAN at the upcoming Stock Shows below:

San Angelo
2/4 - 2/20

San Antonio Stock Show & Rodeo (SALE)
2/10 - 2/27

Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo (HLSR)
2/28 - 3/20

Rio Grande Valley Livestock Show (RGV)
3/10 - 3/20

Rodeo Austin
3/13 - 3/27

San Angelo Rodeo
4/1 - 4/17

Buccaneer Days (Buc Days)
5/5 - 5/15



GO TEXAN.

NEW MEMBERS!

- ☆ [Randy's Rubs](#)
- ☆ [T and T Roots](#)
- ☆ [Pro Health Specialty Potatoes](#)
- ☆ [Hydronation, LLC](#)
- ☆ [Horizon Grass Farms](#)
- ☆ [Tyson Fresh Meats, Inc](#)
- ☆ [Taylor County Historical Center](#)
- ☆ [The Painted Alpaca](#)
- ☆ [Sisters Spice Co, LLC](#)
- ☆ [Yellowbird Foods](#)
- ☆ [Keto Sweets Bakery](#)
- ☆ [Chillin Gelato](#)
- ☆ [Ola Mae's](#)
- ☆ [Nemr8, LLC](#)
- ☆ [Texas Hill Country Cultivators Farm](#)
- ☆ [Neu Cattle Co](#)
- ☆ [Happy Tomato](#)
- ☆ [Mcshan Florist, Inc.](#)

Did You Know?

TDA enforcement division provides prosecution of statutory and regulatory violations to protect consumers purchasing goods and services in Texas.

TDA farmers market nutrition program provides access to healthy, locally grown foods from TDA-certified farmers markets for low-income mothers, mothers-to-be, and infants.

TDA international marketing promotes Texas agricultural commodities, products and companies through inbound and outbound trade missions, livestock shows, trade leads, referrals, and research of international markets.

TDA pest survey works in partnership with other state and federal agencies in the detection and mitigation of agricultural pests.



Texas Ag Stats:

- ★ Farms across Texas made up 127 million acres of agricultural land (managing almost 74 percent of the state's 268,581 square miles).
- ★ In 2017, the USDA-NASS census showed presented a 151 percent increase in the number of operations with honey sales in 2017.
- ★ Texas is No.1 for specialty operations with sales of deer, ducks, geese, quail, and emus!
- ★ Texas agriculture contributed nearly \$25 billion to the economy in products sold in 2017.

Recipe of the Month

Texas Chili

[Dinner then Dessert](#)

Ingredients

2 tablespoons vegetable oil
2 yellow onions, diced
3 garlic cloves, finely minced
2 pounds ground beef, (85/15)
1 teaspoon kosher salt
1/4 cup ancho chile powder
2 tablespoons cumin
1 tablespoon paprika
1 tablespoon brown sugar
29 ounces diced tomatoes
6 ounces tomato paste
4 cups beef broth

Directions

1. Add vegetable oil and onions to a large dutch oven on medium heat and cook until the onions are translucent, about 6-8 minutes.

2. Add the garlic, and cook for 1 minute stirring well.

3. Add the ground beef, breaking apart as you cook it for 6-8 minutes but leave the chunks a bit larger, and allow the beef to sear well.

4. Add in the salt, ancho chile powder, cumin, paprika and brown sugar and stir well, cooking for 1 minute.

5. Add in the diced tomatoes, and tomato paste and whisk well until the tomato paste is well mixed in.

6. Add in the beef broth and bring to a simmer, reduce the heat to medium low and cook for 1 hour, stirring every fifteen minutes.



7. Chili is done when the beef broth is reduced to the right consistency where the ground beef is not lost in the gravy.

Your thoughts on...

interesting facts about Texas...



Misty Myers-Blier

December 28, 2021 at 12:56 PM · 🌐

INTERESTING FACTS ABOUT TEXAS

1. Beaumont to El Paso : 742 miles
2. Beaumont to Chicago : 770 miles
3. El Paso is closer to California than to Dallas... [See more](#)

Sandra Haseloff
Born here, will die here

Samantha Tucker

If Texas ever divides up I'm going wherever H-E-B goes.

Sarrera Francisco
Love Texas

Tweet



Tell Us... did you make a New Years Resolution?



@TexasDepartmentofAgriculture



@TexasDeptofAg



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